



Strengthen Washington's Child Care & Early Learning System by Investing in High-Quality Play Groups

- Fully fund the pilot project in Governor Inslee's proposed FY19-21 Operating Budget to expand Play and Learn groups in DSHS Community Service Offices (\$690,000)
- Expand Play and Learn groups statewide by funding a two-year statewide pilot project for \$1.5 million

Facilitated play groups provide access to high-quality early learning opportunities to thousands of children who are not currently benefiting from formal early learning programs. The majority of Washington children under five are in the regular informal care of parents, family members, friends, or neighbors (FFNs), and do not attend formal child care programs, especially children in communities of color, low-income families and refugee/immigrant communities. Increasing access to high-quality play groups will strengthen our ability to support all families in this critical phase of child development, and get Washington closer to its goal to have 90% of children ready for kindergarten when they enter.

Facilitated play groups support early brain development and kindergarten readiness:

- Play group curriculum is based on the latest research in early childhood brain development and family engagement
- Play groups give parents and informal caregivers a free, accessible place to meet other families and get support
- Sessions are held weekly in community spaces in the child's own neighborhood and language
- Investing in FFN caregivers is an under-recognized lever for addressing social inequality and the school preparedness gap

Family, Friends and Neighbors care is a significant, underfunded part of Washington's Early Learning System

90% of brain development happens in First Five Years

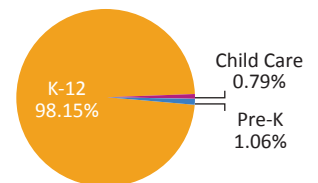


Nearly 75% of children under 5 are not in licensed child care or government preschool programs



CCA of WA 2013 survey of Washington families

Washington's Birth to Grade 12 Education Spending



Katherine Stevens, AEI, Jan. 2018

Child Care Aware of Washington's multi-year strategy to connect families with expanded Play and Learn Groups in their communities:

- Helps address our state's child care crisis and increases kindergarten readiness through our network of effective, reliable, replicable, evidence-based Play and Learn choices.
- Through a two-year pilot project in western and eastern Washington, build out CCA of WA's umbrella system of support model with three Play and Learn choices for families. Increase the number of play groups to meet demand.
- Request full funding for the statewide system of support model up to \$8 million over multiple years.

